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NEGRO CASAS JUMPS TO EMLL

After several months of speculation by fans throughout the world, Mexico's finest luchador, Jose "el Negro" Casas, has finally switched promotions, leaving the UWA for the EMLL.

Casas, who debuted in 1978, has worked primarily for the UWA and its head Carlos Maynes Flores since his debut. He has occasionally wrestled the Baja California and California circuits for the WWA and its head Benjamin Mora junior. Since his debut, however, he has rarely worked for Mexico's oldest and now-largest promotion, the EMLL, headed by Francisco "Paco" Alonso Lutherroth.

As reported by all-sports Mexico City daily newspaper *Ovaciones* in its issue of Thursday, May 28, 1992, Casas has signed a long-term exclusive contract to wrestle for the EMLL. He was given a start or debut date of Friday, June 5, 1992. That is the Friday when, after two weeks of unscheduled delays, the EMLL returns to its main arena, la Arena Mexico, for a multi-week tour where it intends to run some of the biggest angles and largest cards of the year.

Casas worked a card Saturday night (May 30) in Los Angeles, as billed, and in the front row was, of all people, AAA promoter Antonio Pena. Neither was available for comment, unfortunately, though many California area lucha libre fans did try to follow up on this story.

The story went on to say that Casas was challenging Atlantis for the latter's NWA World Middleweight Championship. The paper intimated that there might be some kind of a UWA/NWA title unification match (which I believe would be a first), but I am highly skeptical of that. I would think Casas will drop the UWA belt fairly soon.

I wish I could tell you how it came to this, and the full background of the story. Perhaps one day I will be able to. As for now, I have only speculation and educated guesses. The best guess is that Casas simply sat back and said to the three promotions (UWA, EMLL, and AAA) that he'd go to the promotion that gave him the best offer. I also suspect that as a condition of his employment, he would be allowed to retain his right to tour with New Japan. With the change of bookers of the Universal Japan promotion from UWA's el Gran Hamada to EMLL's el Brazo de Oro, the politics of allowing Casas to retain his New Japan dates became considerably easier. I don't know enough to speculate what other non-financial terms might have been part of the offer, but I wouldn't at all be surprised to see Casas with the NWA World Middleweight Title around his waist. Originally, as reported by *The Wrestling Observer Newsletter*, Atlantis had been scheduled to drop the title he has held since 8/1/90 (i.e., very long) to la Bestia Salvaje. Salvaje had become injured and had missed that match, but the two were booked for the Arena Coliseo main event this past Friday night (5/29) as captains of opposing teams. After the match was booked, Casas jumped, and the match that I had thought would set up a Salvaje-Atlantis match ended up featuring more of the Satanico-Morgan scenario instead.

I had expected the AAA to air on Galavision this past Sunday night (5/31) and they didn't; the EMLL "Estrellas de la Lucha Libre" show aired as usual. If that trend continues, we should see Negro Casas on Galavision starting on Sunday, June 14th.

Speaking of Galavision, I called and spoke with them this week at some length. They said that all the programming decisions are made from Mexico City. Apparently, Televisa sends up a signal onto a Galaxy satellite one hour before we see it on cable on Galavision, and the folks in Los Angeles just re-direct the signal from off of the satellite through the cable (and onto channel 22 in Los Angeles). I figured that if there would be any change (and I did expect it) to the Triple A, this week would be the change week. That was because this was the week after the AAA had secured the prime Sunday afternoon slot on Mexico City's channel 2. But no such luck. And apparently bad luck is just what it was, as the Triple A's third-ever card had a hot line-up and an almost unbelievable finish to the main event.

The AAA's third weekly television show of all time was taped Friday night, May 29, 1992, at "el Auditorio Benito Juarez" in Veracruz, Veracruz (the same venue as their first show). Four matches were taped, with one more off of television, and I am sorry to report I do not know who was booked for that opening match. I'll have that next week.

AAA TELEVISION REVIEW

The television opener featured the debut of one of the rudo teams that has been real big on the Puebla circuit. I have never seen them before. They are legit brothers (well, that's what *Rory Lucha* says) billed as Doctor Maldad and Mister Maldad ("maldad" here meaning essentially "evil"). They wear identical white body stockings, but one has a white mask (Doctor) and one a black mask (Mister) and so you can see the references to Doctor Jekyll and Mister Hyde. Despite the fact that they were debuting, they lost in three falls to el Super Gallo (just jumped from the EMLL, means The Super Rooster) and one of my new favorites, Winners. This was said to be a good match. I have seen Winners before and been very impressed; and Super Gallo is fine if not at that level. Rated by David Scherer: **1/2

The second television match featured the tecnico team of Super Star (just jumped from the EMLL, he is not the Los Angeles guy but someone who has taken over his gimmick), el Giro, and el Colorado. They got a television victory this week, defeating the rudo squad of el Picudo, Heavy Metal, and el Brazo de Platino. Heavy Metal is of course Erick Casas Ruiz, son of Senior AAA referee Jose "Pepe" Casas and brother of el Felino and el Negro Casas. The big surprise in this match was the performance of el Brazo de Platino. I have seen him only once and was not favorably impressed, but he was said to have really shone here. The babyface tecnicos did some nice dives in the third fall, which might well have been the best (and most spectacular) fall of the night. Rated at *** 1/4.

I don't have a winner in the semifinal match-up, as you shall see in the explanation. The match-up was: on the tecnico side, Pedro "el Perro" Aguayo, Super Muneco (just jumped from the AWWA), and el Solar I (just jumped from the UWA), versus, on the rudo side, Fishman (just jumped from the UWA), "el Chacho (means slave) Herodes (just jumped from the EMLL), and Cien Caras (still CMLL World Heavyweight Champion). At the end of the third fall, the faces did big dives out of the ring onto the rudos. Some of the dives hit and some missed, and at least one of the rudos got back in the ring, apparently before the count of twenty. Well, babyface referee Pepe Casas went over to the tecnicos on the floor and raised their hands while heel referee "el Suspenders" climbed into the ring and raised the rudos' hands. Then both teams left without any apparent solution to the discrepancy. When I hear the tape or see it, maybe I can get a better idea of how it happened. The best guess is that the rudos won via count out of the ring, though. Said to be a fairly good match. ** 1/4.

The main event had la Mascara Sagrada defending the Mexican National Light Heavyweight Championship versus challenger Universo Dos Mil. The seconds in this match were Superstar for Mascara and Cien Caras for Universo. The referee for the match was heel referee "el Suspenders." On a side note, the AAA had trouble getting the National Commission to authorize these matches as title defenses, having apparently to do some heavy back-room bargaining to get the permission, which was just granted on Wednesday evening, 48 hours before the match.

I mention the seconds because they were as much as, or more so, a part of the story of this match as were the wrestlers in the ring. In the first fall, each wrestler sent his opponent out of the ring with various and sundry maneuvers. Superstar was strictly obeying the rules which state that a second may not interfere in the match at all or risk disqualification for his wrestler. On the other side, though, Cien Caras, brother of Universo Dos Mil, was freely interfering on behalf of his brother, though being careful to try to keep it behind the referee's back. By the end of the first fall, the fans were in an uproar. Still, Sagrada's technical expertise proved too much for Universo in the first fall, and Sagrada got a submission with the figure four leg lock. The second fall saw Caras interfere even more. The fans were getting quite put out with the situation at hand when suddenly Pedro "el Perro" Aguayo races out of the dressing room. He asks Superstar to leave and says he will be the second (which I believe is technically not permitted; you can't replace seconds in mid-match). Ref "el Suspenders" jumps out of the ring to send Aguayo back, saying this is not allowed, and on the other side of the ring, Caras and Universo drag Sagrada outside the ring, foul him, etc., so that Sagrada is unable to beat the count of twenty back into the ring. So our match is at one fall apiece. Aguayo stays out at ringside "as a concerned fan." The third fall sees more of Caras's interference on Universo's behalf. A couple of times, "el Suspenders" catches Caras and warns him but does not call for the disqualification. Finally, Aguayo has had enough. He races to the other side and tries to pull Caras away from the action. Caras and Aguayo get to fighting and out of the ring spills "el Suspenders" to stop this fight and to send Aguayo back to the back. Suddenly, Aguayo, out of frustration, fouled Caras—to the relieved cheers of the crowd. The referee, seeing the foul, jumps back to the ring, sprints over to Universo Dos Mil, and raises Universo's hand as the new Mexican National Heavyweight Champion. The fans are stunned. The ref raises Universo's hand several more times and straps the title belt around Universos's waist to emphasize that, yes, this has been a title change. The ref has disqualified Mascara because an illegal second fouled a legal second. How cheap, huh? And why do I see Konnan's hand all over this match 100%? No match and all story, this one was, downgraded to ** 1/2 for the cheap finish. Next week I will have results and a review of the second week of the AAA show, which was partially pre-empted on satellite by the overrun of the Indianapolis 500. I do know that the debut of the "micro-dudes" saw the namesake wrestlers accompany the micro-dudes to the ring and, at the end of the match, the real Destruktors came to the ring to help the "Micro Destruktors" pound away at Micro Konnan, Micro Misterioso, and Micro Volador. The tecnico micro-dudes then had to be saved by the larger-sized tecnicos from the next match. Well, that's next week.

EMLL TELEVISION REVIEW

Here are the results of the EMLL card held Friday, May 22, 1992; broadcast Saturday, May 23, 1992, in Mexico City; and broadcast Sunday, May 31, 1992, on Galavision in the U. S. A.

The "inicial" (first match) of the card did not air; that had the debut in la Arena Coliseo of Kaoru Maeda, who wrestles for the Universal Wrestling Federation (Japanese lucha libre group) in Japan. She teamed as a ruda with la Venus to face Lady Apache and Lola "Dinamita" Gonzies. After the opening, which featured some new graphics, and the introduction from announcers Miguel Linares and Raul Sarmiento, we were on our way. Ring announcer Vitorino gave all the introductions.

The "segunda" (second match on the card) was our television opener. The tecnico team of Eclipse, el Pegaso, and captain el Guerrero Samurai II lost in two straight falls in 17:14 to the rudo squardon of el Archangel de la Muerte, Marabunta, and captain Enjambre. The referees for this first match were el Pompin and Roberto "el Guero" Rangel. I bet Paco Alonso did not know this at the time but this match was, I believe, Enjambre's and Marabunta's last match in the EMLL as they jumped to the AAA this past week. The first fall went 12:34 before all three rudos made captain el Guerrero Samurai II submit to a cross between a figure-four leg lock and "el nudo," which is a deathlock ("un medio cangrejo") while you are picking your opponent up off the ground by the arms at the same time. The second fall went only 4:40 before Enjambre pinned el Guerrero Samuair II in a battle of captains with a rough german suplex hold ("la desnuncadora") that Garry Albright would have been proud of. In fact, Samurai sold it for over 3:00 straight after the fall. Overall, the match with these guys was pretty good, considering they are all six way down on the EMLL "push ladder." El Guerrero Samurai and el Archangel de la Muerte were the best to my eye, and Enjambre was the best I have ever seen him. I was ~~very~~ disappointed in el Pegaso. I had seen him live on Sunday, September 21, 1991, at la Pista Arena Revolucion, and had been highly impressed. He didn't look very good at all to me in this match. Eclipse is absolutely tiny. He and Climax may be the only two luchadores shorter than Super Astro in Mexico. He does some (not a lot) spectacular stuff but at that size I guess he should. The match was okay though a bit slow-paced at the start. El Guerrero Samurai has improved a lot and with the following week's TV show has been on three straight weeks, which is very rare for the EMLL to do that. Samurai and Enjambre did pull at each other mask in the latter falls, and Enjambre had his ripped off at one point, but just barely. Eclipse did a really nice tope in the match and at the end of the second fall there were three consecutive dives between the second and third ropes ("topes suicidas") leaving the captains in the ring to settle things. Not bad. **.

The tercera (third match of the card, also called "especial") was our second match on television. This saw the Galavision debut of "The Cavemen," las Cavernicolas I, II, and III. They were made up of Cro Magnon, who used to be called el Hombre Bala and is a brother of el Pirata Morgan; Troglodita, who used to be called el Verdugo and is also a brother of el Pirata Morgan; and Popitekus, who was the captain. Popitekus had started his career several years back as a caveman type and this is his return to the rudo fold. That trio defeated the tecnico team in three falls in 11:46. The tecnicos were la Aguila Solitaria, el Tigre Universitario, and captain el Solar II. The referees for this match were el Tigre Hispano and "el Gato Montini" (Javier Medina). The cavemen attacked the tecnicos before the first fall, including attacking them with the cavemen's bones they brought to the ring as part of their "ring attire," and that led to the rudo triumph in 3:17 as Cro Magnon gave el Solar II a nice "senton" (back-first big splash) and Troglodita simply put a foot on Solar's chest for the pin. The second fall saw the tecnico comeback, climaxed when la Aguila Solitaria pinned Popitekus at the 5:26 mark after a very nicely done diving body press (splash) from off the top rope with a 90-degree spin on Aguila's part for a perfect landing. The third fall went 3:03 before the two brother cavemen dropped Aguila Solitaria into a covering position onto el Solar II and both cavemen added pressure to cause Solar II to be pinned. The faces did not have a ton to do in this match. The cavemen are all ultra-heavyweights on the Mexican scale and the faces are all welterweights. During the one victorious tecnico fall, the good guys used their speed to make the rudos run into each other in a three stooges manner. I don't believe the EMLL has any major plans for las Cavernicolas, and probably will just use them as a comedy mid-card tag team, without a regular feud or program. The EMLL has always been big (as is Antonio Pena) on not giving the fans five straight matches in a hard-core orgy. They book based on having a midgets' match, a ladies' match, or a comedy match, to give the audience something different from the key matches, and to give the audience time to rest and not have to pay intense attention to every match. That's basically Salomon Grundy's role; he's so over as "un hombre montana" that he sparked a skirmish between the UWA and the EMLL in bidding for the rights to his services last September. La Aguila Solitaria, the veteran of the tecnico team, had a new mask and a new full body costume which looked nice. El Tigre Universitario's mask is cool but otherwise he does not do much for me, though I guess he was better than his first television match a few weeks back. As for el Solar II, he always seems the same to me, never better or worse, but always okay. Of the cavemen, I thought el Hombre Bala (brown hair and all) was more into his gimmick and showed more enthusiasm than the other two. Popitekus, having let his hair grow out, looks almost cuddly and has a face that couldn't scare a child. El Verdugo, though, has put on a ~~lot~~ of weight. He has semi-retired over the past two to three years and doesn't travel outside Mexico City to wrestle. It really looks like he

has let himself go to put physically and while he didn't screw up any moves, I wasn't too impressed. I can see why he was a late addition to the team and I'll bet a reluctant one at that. **.

The quality of workers improved somewhat in the final two matches. The semifinal matched the rudo team of Emilio CHarles junior, el Egipcio (Mexican National Heavyweight Champion), and captain el Supremo I (former Mister Mexico). The tecnico team featured Apolo Dantes, el Hijo del Solitario, and captain el Filoso (the ghost of lucha libre past from the wrestling museum). The rudo team made it three straight rudo wins on the card in three falls in a total elapsed time of 14:45. The first fall went to los tecnicos as Dantes hit a perfect dropkick from off of the top rope onto el Egipcio. The second went only 2:53 before el Supremo I pinned el Filoso with a regular side suplex (the same finishing move as the third fall of last week's match that involved these two). The third fall went 6:16 before Dantes was pinned after a poor running spinning splash by el Egipcio. The EMLL did something they don't often do (I can't remember the last time) in that they built two future stories in one match; one very obviously and one obviously but still with some subtlety. The first was the continuing feud between el Supremo I and el Filoso. This was the second straight week the two ripped at each other's mask, and next week they continued to do the same for a third straight week. The more subtle story line created involved the long-anticipated turn of el Hijo del Solitario. He seemed to have communication problems with Apolo Dantes from the start and even by the middle of the first fall, Soli was "not trying very hard" to tag Dantes when Dantes was in trouble but reaching for the tag. A few times, when Dantes got close enough to tag, Soli just jumped down off of the ring apron. In the third fall, when Dantes was getting pinned to end the match, Soli came in to breakup the winning pinfall cover but decided not to save Dantes. The fans were really booing Soli for this one. Dantes got put over strong, too, kicking out of several strong moves before finally being pinned. This makes the third babyface to turn on Dantes in the last year: Javier "el Monarca" Cruz, Eddy Guerrero, and now el Hijo del Solitario. To my knowledge, no there have been no other face-to-heel turns on television by anyone else in the last year. The EMLL must think real highly of Dantes to keep turning everybody on him; but can lightning strike thrice? Supremo and Filoso did all right in their war but it kind of took a back seat to the Dantes/Solitario war. After the match, Soli slid out of the ring. He apparently went after a female fan who was heckling him. It was reported in several newspapers that Solitario did punch out three photographers right after the match; for that he was suspended for the month of June and fined 5,000,000 pesos, which I calculate to be about one year's pay. The fine and suspension were levied by the Distrito Federal Wrestling Commission, and not by the promotion, so it may be legit. As you will see on the next page, Soli ended up turning on Dantes full-fledged on the next television taping, so I also find it really funny that he would turn right before he has a thirty-day suspension. So is the suspension a work or legit? Time will tell. For this match, well executed, ** 3/4.

The main event to me was the best match of the show. The tecnico team finally won one, as Atlantis, Lizmark, and captain Casanova el Vampiro Canadiense defeated the rudos team of Jerry "el Puma" Estrada, Javier "el Monarca" Cruz, and captain Pierroth "el Harlequin" junior. The match went three falls and 15:07. The first fall saw Vampiro make Pierroth submit in 6:51 to a side abdominal stretch submission hold (almost a standing octopus hold). The second went 5:42 before Pierroth junior made Vampiro submit to the "de a caballo" (camel clutch) submission hold. The third ended in confusion in 2:34, as senior referee Rangel stopped the contest and awarded the match to the tecnicos as Vampiro was punching and pounding Pierroth unmercifully. I don't know if Pierroth actually submitted or whether he simply "was unable to defend himself." As you can tell by the finishes, the entire focus of the match was on an all-out feud between Pierroth and Vampiro. Vampiro has been so popular with the fans (specially young female fans) that he has not needed a belt or a program or a feud to draw; he does that on his own considerable charisma. However, now with two-barrelled competition, the EMLL may need to turn up the heat on all its issues and put its big stars in hot issues to help draw fans to la Arena Mexico for the summer tour. We have Filoso/Supremo, Cielon Ramirez/Felino, Dantes/Solitario, Pierroth/Vampiro, Satanico/Pirata Morgan, and soon, Atlantis/either Bestia Salvaje or Negro Casas. This is some heavy stuff and will do well. Pierroth and Vampiro have already had their first singles' match of the feud, held Saturday, May 30, at la Pista Arena Revolucion (no result known yet). As for my thoughts on this match, it is clear that the locker-room scuttlebutt of how all the English-speaking foreigners love to work with Pierroth junior is clearly true. Vampiro looks more energized and trusting with Pierroth than with any other opponent. They did a nice spot for the fans where Vampiro wore a shirt in the ring and Pierroth, that evil guy, ripped off poor Vampiro's shirt. It got exactly the reaction they expected and wanted--the female fans loved it. Speaking of costumes, Paco Alonso once said in an interview in *Weekly Gong* magazine that Jerry Estrada's costume is a take-off or copy of Randy "Macho Man" Savage's in the WWF. I thought Estrada would set a new record for running the ropes, as the tecnicos just whipped him back and forth into the ropes consistently. But Jerry's in good shape and he can handle it. As for Cruz, Atlantis, and Lizmark, they are veteran and solid enough to do a professional job and keep the fans interested but still to stay out of the way of the story being told elsewhere in the ring. And I think it takes a real veteran to both work a full match and also stay "out of the way" as much as possible. A very thorough job by everyone involved. Mind you, Vampiro is still not a super worker, but his timing and ring presence have grown and he's at least learned a few moves from Fuerza, Pepe, and Pierroth. ***. By the way, the Vampiro contest is still on; I'm still looking for his real name. I know his first name is "Billy" but does anyone have his surname?

NEXT WEEK'S EMLL TELEVISION REVIEW

Thanks to reader David Scherer, I have a rarity this week--the results and stories for next week's Galavision television show. Stop right here and go to the next page if you want to be surprised by what unfolds on television. This is the card that was held Friday, May 29, 1992, at la Arena Coliseo in Mexico City and was broadcast Saturday, May 30, 1992, in Mexico City (on Televisa channel nine there) and on the Morelos Satellite. I expect it to air Sunday, June 7, 1992, on Galavision. Here we go:

The initial of the card was also the television opener. In it, tecnicos Eclipse and el Guerrero Samurai II defeated rudos el Mestizo (means "half-breed") and el Halcon Negro junior two falls to one. The faces won the third fall via double count out of the ring. The tecnicos did big dives out of the ring and the rudos were unable to beat the count of twenty back into the ring. El Guerrero Samurai II may win the "Cartometro" "Lance del Semana" for his dive at the end of this match. He was on the ring apron, facing the ring, and hopped up to the second rope. So far it looks like Yoshihiro Asai's (now wrestling as Saigon Dragon el Ultimo Dragon) moonsault bodyblock outside the ring, called "la quebrada" in Mexico. But instead of doing a simple backward swan flip dive onto his opponent, in which you would dive head first, Guerrero Samurai did the flip while diving feet first. If you have seen Lyger's shooting star press, it sounded when described to me like that, but off of the second rope outside the ring. Rated at **.

I should point out here that on neither the show that aired 5/31 nor the 6/7 show was there any "Cartometro," "NotiLucha," interviews, or anything else. They may have dropped the Cartometro (popularity poll) from the television show. Super Luchas has been printing the cartometros regularly as well, so I will check to see if one appears. The match that did not air on television this week was the segunda at the arena. It featured Javier "Chamacao" Valaguez and la Aguila Solitaria versus el Guerrero Negro and el Septiembre Negro junior. I also want to point out here, as alerted to me by Carlos Rey, lucha libre columnist for Alex Marvez's super Three Count Professional Wrestling Newsletter, that announcers Miguel Linares and Raul Sarmiento took a real savage dig at Doctor Alfonso Morales, who left the EMLL show for the AAA show. Linares and Sarmiento called Morales a chicken who ran away and said that he deserted them. I have met both Linares and Morales and both were super nice to me and I am genuinely surprised by this outburst. Also, the announcers are hired by Televisa, so they really all work for the same company anyway, so that makes this doubly surprising.

The tercera had tecnicos America (ex-el Pantera II), el Hijo del Solitario, and la Mano Negra defeat Ponzona (ex-America Rocca), el Espectro de Ultratumba (ex-el Gran Cochise), and el Espectro junior two falls to zero. Solitario was a face in this match as a tease for the next one. The "inconsistent" America did a quebrada off of the top rope into the ring in the second fall to gain the victory for his team, while, at the same time, el Hijo del Solitario was doing a big tope suicida to an opponent outside the ring.

So we are all set up for our semifinal. The rudo team of Pierroth junior, Jaque Mate, and el Supremo I had already won the first fall from tecnico squad Apolo Dantes, el Filoso, and el Faraon. The tecnicos made a big comeback in the second fall, and went to their big dives outside the ring. El Faraon did "una silla," a tope or plancha delivered after el Faraon had gotten a running start running along the ring apron. Dantes did a big dive and either missed or hurt himself doing the big dive. He was apparently rolled back in the ring for the pinfall or maybe he was counted out; the actual result was that the tecnicos lost in two straight. But the result became secondary to a very rare outside interference angle. Out of the back, out of nowhere (actually out of the tecnico locker room) comes el Hijo del Solitario at a sprint to ringside. He attacks Dantes without any prior provocation or motivation. Well, none this week anyway. This apparently was a hard-core turn and got over as well as expected with the fans in the arena. So another babyface turns on Dantes and el Hijo del Solitario finally turns heel (as had been predicted for so long). I want to reserve full comment before I see it but I bet it'll go over great with the fans. If they set up a hair versus mask match this year, there's not a chance in the world Dantes will win. In previewing this match, the newspaper Oraciones had highlighted the ongoing mask feud between el Supremo I and el Filoso, and I understand that while these two kept their heat, they did not do anything special to add to it.

The newspaper for the main event forecast it as a chance for la Bestia Salvaje to prove he was ready again to challenge Atlantis for the NWA World Middleweight Championship. That may have been the focus of the original script of the match. But with Negro Casas jumping aboard just 48 hours before match time, has Salvaje gotten screwed out of his title victory again? The match that occurred saw el Satanico, el Pirata Morgan, and la Bestia Salvaje defeat Atlantis, el Dandy, and Saigon Dragon, el Ultimo Dragon, in two straight falls. The official finish of this main event was a heel ref finish. The two Infeinales (Satanico and Morgan) ripped off Atlantis's mask, and Atlantis let himself be pinned rather than struggle and possibly reveal his identity, and heel referee "el Gato Montini" counted the three count cover anyway. Satanico and Morgan dropped hints of their "continuing difficulties" in not seeing eye to eye. In fact, Morgan came out and was not wearing the now-standard Infeinales tights, but his older black leather singlet get-up. This appears to have been the best match of the past two weeks. Salvaje in particular, who is now in my opinion one of the top five luchadores in Mexico, was said to have been fantastic. Can't wait. Rated at ***1/2

FEDERATION NEWS

AAA

I do not have too much news from this promotion this week. Just two items:

* They ran a second card this past Friday night, May 29th. This one was held at la Arena Jalapa in Jalapa, Veracruz (the origin of 'jalapeno' peppers, get it?, and also Octagon's legit home town). The main event was hometown boy Octagon defending his Mexican National Middleweight Championship versus the number one contender Fuerza Guerrera. Considering their past history, a rare Octagon match in his home town, and how they want to get the new promotion over, I bet they had a super match. The semifinal paired los Nuevos Destruyores del Ring (Tony Arce, el Vulcano, and Rocco Valente) versus el Angel Azteca, el Misterioso, and el Volador. The tercera featured el Fantasma and CHicano Power junior (love that mask; he just jumped from the EMLL) versus la Parca and el Indomito (the Corvette winner who just jumped from the UWA). The segunda had two new jumpers from the EMLL, Enjambre and Marabunta, teaming with Reptil to fight (Super) Kiss (just jumped from EMLL), (Super) Pinochio (just jumped from the AWWA), and el Galactico, a new name to me. The inicial featured one of my true favorites from my first trip to Mexico City two years ago, el Marques junior. He, just having jumped from the EMLL, teamed with el Matematico II, who just left the UWA, to face el Eslabon Perdido and el Angel Mortal, who also just left the UWA.

* The second item is just to summarize who has jumped *just since last week*

—From the AWWA, Super Muneco and (Super) Pinochio are in.

—From the UWA, Fishman, el Solar I, el Indomito, el Angel Mortal, and el Matematico II are in.

—From the EMLL, 'el Chacho' Herodes, Super Star, el Marques junior, CHicano Power junior, Enjambre, Marabunta, Super Gallo, and the not previously mentioned Aaron Grundy are all in. La Mascara (aka Bronce) and la Antifaz have been offered slots by the AAA, according to the papers, but have not yet decided; Bronce has not worked EMLL dates recently. As for el Hijo del Santo, he has not yet worked an AAA card, so I am sure he is still having second thoughts about the jump. The AAA has had much more media and public support than I thought it would get. Antonio Pena had seemed to rub a lot of people the wrong way during his stint at EMLL but he and the promotion have gotten nothing but rave reviews from the Mexican press, especially *Custodia* magazine, the tabloid magazine with the most penetrating lucha libre column around. This week's column was highly favorable to the AAA and especially el Justiciero (who started a new union) and it called the old union and I quote "mafioso, full of gangsters."

WWA

Speaking of Pena, he was in the front row for the second WWA card in Los Angeles this month. Also in the crowd was Dan Farren, who was kind enough to file this report. The FMW drew a little over 1,000 fans to the California State University at Los Angeles gym on Saturday, May 29, 1992, for the following card:

- 1) The first four matches involved mostly wrestlers out of Jalisco Promotions and other locals. In the inicial, Chacal Rivera won two out of three falls from Cosmos.
- 2) The segunda saw a battle of wrestlers from the FMW promotion in Japan. Akihito Ichihara, a poor man's Shinya Hashimoto, defeated el Ultra Tiger (Yukihide Ueno) in quite a size mismatch. This went just one fall.
- 3) In the tercera, Super Star junior (aka Crazy Boy) and el Piloto Suicida took two out of three falls from the legendary Al Murrieta and el Murella del Ring.
- 4) The fans were left wondering about the finish to the especial. El Chamaco Rebelde and la Estampa Brava apparently went to a no contest in the third fall with the duo of Remington and el Rey Misterio II (aka Collon). The finish of the third fall saw all four men brawling outside the ring when referee Sergio Garcia just raised and waved his hands, sending the boys back to the locker room, well before a twenty-count could have been reached. Apparently Remington drew down the quality of this match quite a bit, as he is just not up to the level of the other three. Remington had his mask removed for a disqualification finish to the second fall. Two kids started fighting in the stands over the outcome of this match, but that was nothing compared to what followed next.
- 5) In the semifinal, los Mercenarios Americanos (Billy Anderson, Tim Patterson, and Louie "Cutie Pie" Spicoli) went to a definite no contest in the third fall with the team of el Fantasma, Mando Guerrero, and Eddy Guerrero. The fans really got into the xenophobic stuff here, apparently unaware that Mando lives in LA and Eddy in El Paso. Fantasma was said to be good with his dropkicks and Mando worked real hard and did a nice moonsault, but as you might suspect, the best of that team was the fantastic Eddy Guerrero, also in my opinion one of the best five luchadores in Mexico. This match was quite unusual for a USA match in that it featured men from three competing promotions—AAA (el Fantasma), EMLL (los Hermanos Guerreros), and FMW (los Mercenarios). I think it's just great.

in the ring but they all worked together fine. Spicoli did his first-ever "tope suicida" ducking under a double clothesline from the Guerreros, backdropping them over the ropes then coming and nailing both of them with his dive between the second and third ropes. The no contest was called because los Hermanos Guerreros turned on el Fantasma. They got mad at "The Phantom" for losing the second fall and they had communication problems throughout the third fall (there was a lot of that this weekend in every promotion). Fantasma accidentally dropkicked the Guerreros and they just flat out turned on him, leading to a 5-on-1 pounding on el Fantasma. The undercard babyfaces all came out to try to save el Fantasma. This got a ton of crowd heat. One 400-pound fan picked up a chair and threw it at the ring. It hit the promoter (Rojas) who is like 5'5" 100 pounds and that's an indication of how wild things were. At the end, Mando Guerrero and Superstar junior had a mano a mano brawl, possibly setting up a feud between the two for the next show (see below). Rated the best match of the show.

6) The Main Event saw tecnicos Bull Raiders (aka el Rey Misterio), Ultraman Dos Mil (aka el Amigo Ultra), and The Lover Boy win two out of three falls from Jose "el Negro" Casas, el Cobarde II, and Fishman in three falls. The Lover Boy is a Los Angeles-based wrestler who wrestles infrequently. He has been around since at least 1984 or 1985. He kept up well with the tecnicos, however, and even pinned Casas to win the first fall. During that fall, Misterio ran up the ring apron and did a plancha into the aisle onto el Cobarde II which left both hobbling afterwards. The third fall saw, you guessed it, communication problems on one team. It seems Casas and Cobarde didn't get along, and lo and behold, Casas turned face on Cobarde! I can't remember the last time Casas worked as a face, but he will on the next show apparently (see below). Originally, el Hijo del Santo had been booked on this show (his name alone would have sold the remaining 1500 seats out) but was pulled Tuesday afternoon before the card for unspecified reasons.

The FMW returns with cards June 4, 1992 (at Tony Longball's Country Club in Reseda, California), June 14, 1992 (at the Cal State-LA gym), and July 4, 1992, at an outdoor venue in Los Angeles to be announced. The June 4th card has el Pandita booked along with Akhito Ichihara, Bull Raiders, el Rey Misterio II, el Ultra Tiger, Ultraman Dos Mil and Mando Guerrero. The card for the 14th has not been announced but Pedro "el Perro" Aguayo and Jose "el Negro" Casas are tentatively booked. The main event on July 4th will be an explosive cage match, as Karl Lauer was quoted as saying "they're bringing in the big cage from Japan." Definitely expect to see el Hijo del Santo on that show (Onita may be an egomaniac, but he's no fool)

Also, in the California area, still no news on the mask match with el Piloto Suicida and el Tornado Negro II from May 17th. If it took place, Suicida won, as he still worked his match on the card of the 30th. Jalisco returned to The All Nations Center on May 31st. Underneath, Gerg Regalado and The Gemini Kid (Eric Anderson) wrestled versus The Thunder Machine and Rick Sadist, a Billy Anderson trainee. Tentatively booked for June 7th is Regalado, Gemini, and The Electric Youth (David Hannah) versus Thunder Machine, Sadist, and Vandal Drummond (Kurt Brown).

UWA

The now-smallest of the three Mexico City based promotions (in terms of wrestlers under full-time contract) had a very unusual television show air in their regular time slot of 2:30 pm local time (=MDT) this past Saturday, May 30th. Rather than air a recent card (presumably because most of their recent TV tapings in the can had wrestlers who have jumped to the Triple A) they aired a show taped Friday, May 8, 1992, at la Arena Netzahualcoyotl. They did not air the opener or the main event but aired the three middle matches on the card.

The TV opener had el Celestial (ex-Blackman) and Transformer (ex-Kendo) defeating the father and son team of el Scorpio I (ex-UWA and WWA World Heavyweight Champion) and el Scorpio junior. Said to be a fair match at best. Rated at * 1/2

The middle match had el Villano I, el Villano IV, and Enrique Vera defeating The Can-Am Express I y II (Phil Lason aka Danny Kroffatt and D. N. S. Funas aka Doug Furnas) and el Signo two falls to one. Danny Kroffatt was disqualified in the third fall for illegally removing the mask of el Villano IV. Said to be even worse than the prior match. Rated at * 1/4.

The main event for television purposes saw Jose "el Negro" Casas (gee, he's jumping ship too isn't he) team with The Baby Face I and The Doctor Wagner junior to defeat el Hijo del Santo, el Solar I (they've jumped), and Haraoki "el Gran" Hamada in three falls. Didn't get a rating on this one but the magazines said it was a super match, and I could go for that.

The main event that did not air on television from this card was Andree el Gigante, el Villano III, and el Villano V facing "los Asesinos del Ring," Canek, Fishman, and The Killer (managed by Andy Barrow). The initial off television was a mano a mano between Resplandor and Takeda. I honestly have no idea why they did not air the el Toreo card of the previous Sunday (5/24) between Canek and el Villano III, which was what I expected to air. And to show a tape this old is very strange indeed. I am, sure you guys don't want to hear the same old song and dance but this promotion looks like it is in big trouble. Oh, did you hear that "UWA" stands for "Canek Wrestling Association?" You

say that that doesn't make any sense? Exactly.

I have two other recent results from UWA wars. The main event of the card held Thursday, May 28, 1992, at la Pista Arena Revolucion was a mascara contra mascara match with Transformer versus Zeus. Now you know Transformer could not lose his mask as that would give way that he had lost a prior mask as "Kendo" which is illegal. Naturally, Zeus lost, and he turned out to be Andres Solano, from Orizaba, Veracruz. He wrestled in the UWA as "Zeus" and in the EMLL as "Baby Richard" and is a real close friend of Doctor Alfonso Morales.

The other main venue the UWA ran the 28th was "el Palenque de la Feria" park in Calaya, Guanajuato. There, los Cowboys (Silver King and el Texano) successfully defended their UWA World Parejas Championships by defeating number one contenders los Cazadores del Cabezas I y II (The Head Hunters A and B) in three falls. Now, the UWA says, the Can-Am Express I y II are the new official number one contenders effective June 1, 1992. One funny thing, the paper called the Head Hunters "los gorditos voladores," or "the flying little fatties!"

Just a note on the other cards the UWA ran this weekend. News from el Toreo on May 31st is in the late news section on page nine. At la Arena Isabel in Cuernavaca, Morelos, on Saturday, May 30, The Black Scorpio, el Gigante Warrior, and Bam Bam Bigelow faced el Villano III, and Texano and Silver King in the main event. And at la Arena "Neza" on Friday, May 29th, The Killer (managed by Andy Barrow) joined Scorpio and Bigelow as they faced Haraoki "el Gran" Hamada, el Villano III, and Enrique Vera. The semifinal was scheduled to be Fishman and Jose "el Negro" Casas versus los Cowboys but I doubt it even came off. The tercera saw Doctor Wagner junior and el Espanto junior versus el Villano IV and el Villano V. The segunda had Moctezuma and el Solar I scheduled to face el Scorpio I and el Scorpio junior, but Solar jumped; and the inicial had Edmuer versus el Dragon CHino II.

One last thing. The UWA combined with the SNL (old union) to promote a card with proceeds going to defray medical expenses of el Dragon CHino I and el Mohicano I, each of whom has a broken something (one has a broken arm and the other has a broken leg though I am not clear which has which) and has missed several weeks. The EMLL sent some wrestlers to aid in the benefit. The card was held on Friday, May 29, 1992, at 5:00 pm in the afternoon so the wrestlers could make other shots. It was held at la Arena San Lorenzo in the Mexico City suburb of Jardines de San Lorenzo. Las Panteras Rosas (los Villanos I, IV, and V) headlined versus Rambo, Jerry "el Puma" Estrada, and la Bestia Salvaje. The semifinal was Silver King, el Texano, and Kato Kung Lee I versus el Engendro, el Lobo Rubio, and Shu, el Guerrero. The tercera had Ciclon Ramirez, Kendo Star, and el Gran Apache II versus el Volcanico, Super Brazo, and el Hijo del Diablo. The segunda had Mario Prado junior, el Mohicano II, and el Corzo versus Marecela, la Gata, and el Ojo de Tigre. The inicial featured el Loco Valentino and el Murcielago Infernal versus el Dragon CHino II and el Hombre de Bronce.

* One other UWA card, from earlier in the week: On Monday, May 25, 1992, at la Arena Isabel in Leon, Guanajuato, Lasser made his 17th straight defense of the UWA World Lightweight Championship that he won at la Arena Puebla on February 5, 1991, against el Khalifa. The opponent for Lasser, making his initial challenge, was el Loco Valentino.

EMLL

See page 10 for the biggest and saddest news story of the week, the heart attack suffered by el Brazo de Plata last week. Besides that tragedy, the biggest news was that the EMLL promoted several big cards over the weekend, including title matches. Here were the line-ups:

* On Friday, May 29, 1992, at el Auditorio Municipal in Lazaro Cardenas, Michoacan, the main event featured the first title defense of the Mexican National Ladies' Parejas Champions, Martha "la Aplandora" Villalobos and la Pantera Surena. Their worthy challengers were Lady Apache and Xochitl Hamada. The semifinal had Lizmark, Ringo Mendoza, and Black Magic (Norman Smiley) versus la Fiera, Sangre CHicana, and Emilio CHarles junior. The segunda had Damian, el Guerrero and el Guerrero Negro versus el Gran Apache I and a local wrestler to be announced. The inicial featured el Ultra Rayo and el Rayo Star (two brothers) versus el Guerrero Norteno and Satanas.

* The next night, Saturday, May 30th, saw Atlantis make the 33rd defense of the NWA World Middleweight Championship that he won in Acapulco on August 1, 1990, from el Dandy (has it been 22 months already?). The challenger, for the second straight time, is la Fiera (Arturo Casco Poblano), and though I don't have the result, I think it's safe to say Atlantis won; it's a pretty safe bet that when he drops it the new champion will be either la Bestia Salvaje or Jose "el Negro" Casas.

* That same day (5/30) was also the Pierroth junior-Casanova el Vampiro Canadiense mano a mano at la Pista Arena Revolucion (no other stipulations like title, mask, or hair were involved in this match).

* Sunday, May 31, 1992, saw the EMLL return to la Pista Arena Revolucion. The Saturday night shows there go from 8:30 pm to 11:00 pm and the Sunday shows go from 5:00 pm-7:30 pm so there are 2 full shows within 24 hours, and they always book completely different wrestlers for each card. The main event for the Sunday show had Kato Kung

Lee I, America, and el Cachorro Mendoza versus el Angel Blanco junior, el Medico Asesino junior, and el Comando Ruso. This main event also tells me that el Medico Asesino junior is staying with the EMLL, and all the groups had "bid" for his services recently; he seemed to be more important than I had originally figured; so I guess this is a feather in the EMLL's cap.

* Sunday, May 31st also saw the card at la Arena Coliseo, results of which can be found in the late news section below. A local EMLL/independent card at la Arena Naucalpan the same night allowed America to work twice in 90 minutes. The Arena Naucalpan show started an hour and a half after the Pista Arena Revolucion card, and America was billed in the main event on both cards. Naucalpan is not more than a thirty minute drive from la Pista Arena Revolucion (I have done it in less time on the Metro there) so the logistics are workable. Plus, America, who used to be "el Pantera II," is the booker or co-booker and promoter at la Arena Naucalpan. He lives close by. He was in the main event with his fellow soccer-gimmicked (and his protege) el Goleador. They teamed with el Nuevo Audaz to face los Ku Klux Klanes I, II, and III.

* Finally, I have the main event of the card held Monday, June 1st, 1992, at the "el Deportivo Olimpico" gymnasium in Mexico City, Distrito Federal. Javier "el Monarca" Cruz teamed with el Satanico to face the duo of el Dandy and The Love Machine. I had kind of expected Art Barr (The Love Machine) to go with Antonio Pena and the AAA, in part to continue his feud with the Blue Panther. But it looks like the final Panther/Machine match was May 15th in Tijuana, opposite the FMW/WWA Tijuana show. It has also been reported that Art Barr will be bringing in his brother Jesse. I do not know what "gimmick" Jesse will have, although the article I saw did say that he has wrestled in the USA as "Jimmy Jack Funk," so maybe that will be his ring name.

* Mainstream Mexican sports magazine *Mundo Deportivo* had a big spread on the lucha libre circuit in Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua; that's very unusual for that straight-sports magazine. They featured several wrestlers and said that the best three luchadores on the circuit were Eddy Guerrero, el Cobarde II, and The Crazy Boy 32 (ex-Rocky Star, one of Dan Farren's and Steve Beverly's fave luchadores). And those lucky folks in Los Angeles got to see two of the three live within the past week!

LATE NEWS

Lots of late stuff! **EMLL:** I have the top two matches from Sunday, May 31, at la Pista Arena Revolucion in Mexico City. In the main event, el Medico Asesino junior, el Angel Blanco junior, and el Comando Ruso defeated America, Kato Kung Lee I, and el Cachorro Mendoza in three falls. In the semifinal, Talisman junior made his second defense of his Distrito Federal Welterweight Championship a successful one by defeating challenger el Mestizo in three falls. I have also found out that in the **AAA** that Octagon retained his Mexican National Middleweight Championship by defeating Fuerza Guerrera in three "hotly disputed" falls on May 29, 1992, at Jalapa. Also, as expected, Atlantis defeated la Fiera for his 33rd straight successful defense of the NWA World Middleweight Championship May 30th in Puebla. On Monday, June 1, 1992, at la Arena Isabel in Leon, Guanajuato, los Intocables del Ring (Pierroth junior, Jaque Mate, and Maskre) were billed in a non-title main event versus los Mosqueteros del Diabolo, los Brazos (el Brazo de Oro, el Brazo de Plata, and el Brazo); so maybe that means el Brazo de Plata is not as bad off as first reported. [Editorial: If he is wrestling this fast after even a scare like that, it's just a matter of time anyway because it shows he just will not learn the big lesson.] I had previewed above the Deportivo Olimpico card for 6/1; in the undercard, the semifinal is el Corallillo, Genaro Contreras II, and el Mohicano II facing el Suspenso, el Danes I, and el Infernal; in the segunda, el Desafio and el Hombre de Fuego face Spraiman and Polaris. The inicial was not listed. One last news, the EMLL announced that two SWS wrestlers were definitely in for the summer tour of la Arena Mexico-Naoki (Naoki Sano) and Hirata (no idea). **UWA:** The main event at el Toreo 5/31 saw Canek, Doctor Wagner junior, and The Killer (managed by Andy Barrow) defeat el Signo, The Black Scorpio, and el Gigante Warrior two falls to one in a battle of rudos. Canek pinned Scorpio clean in the third with a mule kick/senton/cover clean pinfall sequence. The semifinal saw some big news. El Hijo del Santo, Eddy Guerrero, and el Villano III teamed to defeat Jose "el Negro" Casas and los Cazadores del Cabezas I y II (The Head Hunters A and B). The surprise was to see Santo and Guerrero in the UWA; the papers made a big deal about this being "una nueva pareja atomica," referring to the fact that their fathers formed the most famous pareja in Mexican wrestling history. El Villano III made Casas submit to the "de a caballo" (camel clutch) submission hold in the third fall. In the tercera, Miguelito Perez junior and Ricky Santana returned to team with Kahos I, and they defeated Enrique Vera, el Villano IV, and el Villano V in three falls. The segunda saw el Engendro, The Baby Face I, and Shu, el Guerrero draw in the third fall with el Villano I, el Sicodelico, and el Coloso. The inicial saw Lasser, el Celestial (aka Blackman), and el Ninja Sasuke (aka Masa Michinoku) defeat Casandro, Momotaro (aka Monkey Magic Wakita), and the debuting Okano (aka Sakigake Gantetau). At la Arena Puebla June 1, 1992, the main event is Silver King, el Texano, and el Villano III versus Miguelito Perez junior, Ricky Santana, and el Gigante Warrior. The semifinal has el Hijo del Santo, el Coloso, and Eddy Guerrero versus Doctor Wagner junior and las Cazadores del Cabezas I y II. The segunda had el Celestial, el Sicodelico, and Moctezuma versus The Baby Face I, el Scorpio I, and el Scorpio junior. The inicial has Momotaro, Okano, and el Engendro versus el Ojo de Tigre, el Gran Apache I, and el Ninja Sasuke. Bye til next week!

MINI-BIOGRAPHY: EL BRAZO DE PLATA

I am sad to say that the reason I chose "Super Porky" for this biography is that late Wednesday May 27/early Thursday May 28, as reported in 5/20 edition of *La Prensa* newspaper, el Brazo de Plata suffered a heart attack and was listed in "delicate health" at press time. I do not have any further details but will pass them along next week as they become available. El Brazo de Plata was born Jose Alvarado Nieves on March 19, 1963, in Mexico City, Distrito Federal. He is the third eldest of eleven children born to Juan Alvarado, a wrestler who worked under the ring name "Shadito Cruz." Like so many of his brothers, Jose practiced wrestling at the gyms and in the backyard with his father, his father's friends, and his father's friends' kids. This led to a very early debut as a professional wrestler—in late 1978, he joined older brother Jesus (el Brazo de Oro) in a pareja for his first official match. They wrestled as a regular pareja combination, as el Brazo de Oro and el Brazo de Plata (The Arm of Gold and The Arm of Silver) straight through from 1978 to 1981. In March 1980, el Brazo (Juan Alvarado Nieves) debuted and in 1981 he joined his two brothers as a trio. They were billed throughout Mexico as "Los Tres Brazos." They got over well, although el Brazo de Oro was always considered the top worker of the three and was the only brother to get a real push as a singles wrestler. They worked as very popular faces until a match in July 1984 when they as a trio turned rudo, where they have essentially stayed since. In 1987, they left the EMLL to jump to the, at that time, larger UWA promotion to work el Toreo cards. Even by then, el Brazo de Plata had begun to put on weight. Quickly they became the UWA's number one rudo trio. The top tecnico trio at the time was the trio of Rey Mendoza's sons, los Villanos. The two team began a feud which led to two big matches. In August 1987, in Panama City, Panama, the Brazos defeated los Villanos to win the UWA World Trios Championships, the only UWA title change ever in Panama ever. But the feud continued and eventually led to perhaps the most famous trio match of all the 1980's in Mexico. On October 21, 1988, in Monterrey, Nuevo Leon, los Tres Brazos put up their masks in a six-man tag-team match versus los Villanos (I believe they were Villanos I, IV, and V). It drew what is still the all-time record wrestling gate at "la Plaza de Toros Monumental" bull ring in Monterrey. Los Tres Brazos lost, and all three masks came off. Los Brazos lost the UWA belts to Kahos I, el Loco Zandokan, and Rambo in early 1989, then won them back on October 21, 1990, at el Toreo, and lost them again on January 1, 1991, at la Arena Puebla. The team had become the most over trio in all of Mexico. Furthermore, they were so popular and fair with "the boys" that they were considered "peacemakers" and stabilizing forces in the locker room. After several months of negotiations and offers, the trio left the UWA in May 1991 to sign full-time exclusive contracts with the EMLL. There they have had two title matches, one each for the Mexican National Trios Championships and for the CMLL World Trios Championships, and lost both. They have decided to stay with the EMLL and not join the parade to the AAA in May 1992. Now, you will notice that this "mini-bio" has concentrated on the trio as a whole. El Brazo de Plata's biography, though, is completely intertwined in the works with his brothers. Even in Japan, where los Brazos are the biggest hit of all the Mexican teams, the brothers work as a group. It did lead to a brief run as UWA World Parejas Champions in 1991 in Japan, belts that were never defended in Mexico. Of course, when you talk about "Super Porky," you have to talk about the weight. Two years ago, on his first trip to Japan, he was billed or weighed at 145 kg (320 lbs) on a 5'5" body, and I'm sure he's put on weight since. He is definitely in serious medical trouble. How sad—a heart attack at age 29.

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